

DEVOTED TO THE ILLUSTRATION OF SPIRITUAL INTERCOURSE.

"THE AGITATION OF THOUGHT IS THE BEGINNING OF WISDOM."

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WHOLE NO. 136.

The Principles of Nature.

MR. HARRIS' LAST POEM.

PROF. S. B. BRITTAN:

My dear Sir—Your request that I would state some of the leading incidents and circumstances connected with the delivery of that remarkable poem, "A Lyric of the Morning Land," which I wrote for Mr. Harris during my late vacation, imposes upon me a by no means ungrateful task, since it recalls one of the most pleasing interludes of a life which, unlike the Romish Calendar, has not been overcrowded with holidays. Besides, I can but unite with you in wishing that all that can be known from the external, in reference to the origin of these and similar productions, may be open to the fullest investigation, the freest and most careful scrutiny. These things—the miracles of Spiritualism—are not done in a corner, but through the length and breadth of the land; they court the light, and challenge the attention of all unbiased and liberal minds. A priori, one would have inferred that the bare announcement that man, being exalted as to his interiors, may, as upon a mount of transfiguration, hold communion with saints and sages of the elder world; that in his hours of agony angels approach to strengthen and encourage; that friends and kindred, the beloved and cherished of other days, purified from the stains of earth, again woo to an endless union—would have thrilled mankind with delight; that, sustained by an array of facts such as no cause in its infancy ever before could present, it would have stirred the deep heart of Christendom. But a sleep, ominous of death, a lethargy from which only the most powerful stimulants can arouse, has fallen upon the dominant minds of this and other nations. Still, "life belongs to the living," and when the old cisterns fail the people will find new springs and perennial fountains; and those that have been filled up and buried beneath the rubbish of ages will be reopened, that the weary and wandering may be refreshed, and all hearts gladdened and satisfied. Every true man is a prophecy of a better time; every loving heart of the return of the Golden Age; every virtuous and happy home of the restoration of the Eden-bliss.

But to proceed with the facts which I sat down to communicate. Near the close of July last, I received a note from our common friend, Rev. T. L. Harris, requesting me to spend as much of my vacation as other duties would permit, with him in the quiet and healthy location where he had passed part of the summer, seeking a reinvigoration of the energies of his delicate and overtaxed constitution. Accordingly, on the first day of August, Mr. Harris and myself, accompanied by his little son, a lad of eight, leaving Mrs. Harris feeble, but still comfortable, in the hospitable home of her kind friends in Troy, sought the rough and rugged hills of Crafton, situate some fifteen miles westward. Little did I then think that I was bidding adieu for the last time to one of the truest and noblest of women, a meek and patient sufferer, a tried and faithful friend of the cause of unfolding truth. When I returned she was absent with her friends on a visit to the Springs, so that I saw her no more. I can not better express my feelings than in the words of her dearest friend: "She has gone to her new home, as a bud to its blossoming, as a bride to her bridegroom, as a wandering strain of music to the eternal harmony of God. Let us write her name in letters of gold on a tablet of fair ivory. . . . A sister spirit, she walks in white above us. Let us rejoice that the golden life of angels has drawn her to its fullness."

Arriving at our destination, we took rooms at the inn, and in the afternoon walked out to a small, deserted house not far from our lodgings, and entering its unbarred doors we were at once welcomed by a band of Spirits from the serene regions of heavenly melody. They suggested that we should first secure the permission of the external proprietor of the humble mansion, and on the morrow commence our work there. I shall not soon forget the expression of delight which lit up the features of our friend as he found that our coming had been anticipated, and a welcome labor prepared for us. The consent of the owner, the neighboring Squire, was easily secured, and anxious to spend as much time as possible in the open air, Mr. Harris proposed to pass the remainder of the day upon the pond. And here, too, the kindly care of our guardian friends was manifest; it was distinctly said that he must not go upon the upper pond, though he might upon the nearer. This seemed a little strange, and at first wholly inexplicable, till visiting the boat of the latter toward evening he found that, having been left by the decline of the water, it was so shrunk and leaky as to be unsafe until again swelled; yet, as he had been out in it a few days before, he would probably have ventured without the warning, and as he does not swim, the consequences might have been serious.

Early in the morning we repaired to the humble apartment which had been selected, where silence and solitude had long reigned, now to be broken by the low-chanted melodies descending from worlds of harmony and song.

We did not immediately commence reciting the "Lyric," but a series of very profound philosophical statements concerning the spiritual nature of man, and the modes through which an-

cient spiritual communications were given to mankind. These were interspersed with many miscellaneous poems, given mostly at our rooms in the evening. At length the noble LYRIC was commenced, but still we knew not at first that it was other than a continuation of those minor poems. Usually we would receive some five or six pages of prose matter, and in the latter part of the morning the continuation of the "Lyric." But soon the delivery of the poem occupied the whole time of the morning during which the medium could be used; and the same would be resumed at our rooms in the evening.

The "Lyric of the Morning Land" was all spoken, chanted, or sung, varying in manner with the different styles of thought and expression. During the earlier portion, commencing with those exquisite passages in which the fair Lily Queen is introduced, the entrancement was very deep, and the influence seemed soft and gentle, as if of the very soul of love. No mother by the cradle of her first-born—no lovers in the tenderest moment of the disclosure of a youthful affection, ever breathed forth their inmost joy in more melting tones. It was as if Heaven, with its infinite sweetness, its bridal dower of all precious things, was wooing the quickened and responsive earth. And so strange and wonderful were the revelations, so great the contrast between the inner and divine beauty unfolded from the heavens, and the outward and degraded life of man in this world, that a feeling of awe, almost of trembling, stole over us lest some mystic magic, some strange spell of enchantment, were working in our midst. And then, with all the tenderness of a prudent and loving mother, words of truth and encouragement, soothing and persuasive, were addressed to the medium.

In contrast with this scene, "The Hymn of Life's Completeness" was chanted in an elevated and manly voice, like a triumphal ode, recited at the festival of heroes. The songs of the Planets were rehearsed in a strange unearthly melody, as if impersonal existences were pouring their harmonic life through the entranced organs of the medium.

But with the "Marriage of Apollo," or, rather, with the "Prelude" to that beautiful poem, commenced a marked and manifest change in the delivery. The enunciation was more slow, and characterized by the greatest exactness and precision. The inspiration seemed to be ultimately even to verbal expression; and fifty chosen words to be poured through the mind of the instrument, as if some mighty poet of the past, the great Milton, or perhaps some long-forgotten bard, with the rich dower of a noble diction—the rare result of genius and scholarship—had presided over this part of the poem, and aided its ultimate in external speech. And in referring to my original MS. I find that this "Picture-Poem" was written down with such accuracy, that it might have been sent to press with little addition save punctuation.

After this the lyrical element more fully predominates, and the songs that follow were sung with an airy lightness such as I have never witnessed in external art. I remember in this portion Mr. Harris seemed to be conscious of the presence of a band of musical spirits similar to those mentioned in the Appendix to the "Epic of the Starry Heaven," and I well know that neither in his external states, nor in the ordinary conditions of entrancement, have I ever heard such musical tones issue from his lips. The lyrical element seemed to attain its greatest height of sublimity in the "Song of the Marriage of the Stars," of sweetness in the "Eve Song," while in the various songs of the fairies a clear and ethereal melody gushed forth as if poured from a heart that knew naught of earthly cares or mortal sadness. And so the bright song wound itself to a close like the last sweet notes of a clear and silvery bell.

As we perceived the ebbing of that mighty current of harmony which had thrilled our inmost hearts, a feeling of ineffable sadness stole over us; so that the closing strains,

"Oh! Life of Love in Heaven,
For thee I yearn;
Yet from bright morn to even,
I turn, I turn,"

together with the first stanza of the "Finale," may be considered as expressive of our real state.

When the poem was concluded, it was announced that on the morrow an account must be prepared of the external origin and history of the work. We began accordingly to bethink ourselves, and consider what we could say pertinent to our theme, and vainly to regret that we had not taken more copious notes. What was our glad surprise on sitting down to our task in the morning, to receive the noble Preface, and that graceful little "History;" and thus the labor of many hours was accomplished in a few moments. The "Interludes" next succeeded, and last of all were given those exquisite lines commencing,

"The Lord is lover far than man,
No angel can his beauty scan;" etc.,

which could not, from their interior quality, be received until the organs of the medium were specially prepared and harmonized by the melodies that had preceded them.

Many of the minor incidents connected with the delivery of the Lyric have passed from my mind; others are still fresh in my memory. I recollect on one occasion, Brother Harris was endeavoring, after the influx under which he always transcribes

had partially ceased, to decipher or correct some expression which I had but imperfectly caught, and failing to satisfy himself, as he rose from his seat and was preparing to go out, these words came gushing from his lips, as if a sweet reproof for the vain effort.

"When love inspires the palace heart,
And pictures heaven within the breast,
The thought and language is the best,
Far above thine outward art."

Toward the close of the poem the organs of the medium became so exquisitely modulated, that whatever was said through him, even answers to several questions, seemed to flow forth in spontaneous verse. In one instance, as an illustration of the manner in which divine harmonies descend to ultimatum in external language, a sweet little poem was given with such rapidity that I could write but part of the lines; and on asking at the conclusion if he would not repeat some of the first verses, lest they should be forgotten, it was said, "Palaces of memory treasure up thy words for thee." Afterward, when I saw how lost and misunderstood words were supplied in copying, I perceived the significance and felt the truth of the remark.

I wish here to state one thing in regard to this "entrancement," "interior condition," or "mental illumination." As many possess no other idea of Spirits than the pale and ghastly specters so terrible to our good old grandmothers, which still live in our legends, and, it may be, in some of the far "rural districts" of our own "enlightened land," so the favored mortal whose spirit is rapt away in contemplation of heavenly wonders, they associate the nameless terror of the chamber of death, the repulsive horrors of a stiffened corpse. All this is foreign to the truth, the chimera of a misguided imagination. The Interior Condition is not a misguiding with the ordinary self-command of the person. The medium stands or sits as composedly, speaks and gesticulates as naturally in delivering his heavenly message, as one would in repeating similar passages to a circle of his friends. And there is no greater change in the external appearance than in one engaged in mental or audible prayer, to which it nearly corresponds when the latter is genuine and attains its fullness. It is true the life of the self-hood is suspended, but it is that a higher may flow down from the sphere of angels, prefiguring the end of the earthly and the putting on of the heavenly.

There are many incidents connected with our brief sojourn in that quiet retreat, which it would be pleasant to record would time and space permit. Nothing could be simpler, more natural, or further from that fanaticism with which our opponents charge us, than the life we led there. After an early morning repast we repaired to our little cottage, the floor of which the child had strewn with the sweet-scented ferns which grow there in abundance, to give a pleasant odor to those long unoccupied apartments. Sitting for a moment in quietude, uttering low musical sounds, Mr. Harris would pass almost immediately into the interior condition, and for two hours, while his fragrant body, noiselessly playing, or perhaps sleeping upon his fragrant bed, the octaves of those heavenly melodies would flow through the inspired lips of the unconscious medium. Then we proceeded to copy what we had previously received; for the poem was given much faster than we could transcribe. This would continue till a cessation of the influx and physical weariness warned to seek an equilibrium of the system by gentle exercise in the open air. Then away to the pond, perhaps not to return till the long shadows of evening were stretching over the rugged hills. It must not, however, be inferred that we passed the long days of August without refreshment or needful rest. The bushes around afforded a sweet repast, nor was more substantial aliment, brought or sent from the house, wanting; and the green herbage, shaded by venerable trees, offered a couch of repose which kings might envy—and the children of nature freely enjoy. And so the beautiful summer days flew quickly past, and the "Lyric of the Morning Land" was sung, written, and copied, with some forty long pages of other matter, within the short space of three and a half weeks; the time occupied in the delivery of the poem itself being the morning and evening hours of about fourteen days, amounting to about ten of the former and twenty of the latter, as expressed in the "History;" also in the appended note. I shall not soon forget those Sabbath hours of sweet and holy communion. Others will enjoy the Poem, according to their preparation to receive it, in their inmost hearts. Those softly flowing lines and tuneful cadences will be echoed and sung in the crowded markets of the old world and the forest homes of the new. Mothers and lovers, and the sweet voices of innocent children, will rehearse these heart-thrilling melodies and soul-touching songs. The skill and genius of the composer and musician will be summoned forth to express their strange, ineffable charin and wondrous beauty; but never until an inspired lyrist, filled to overflowing from the same divine fountain, shall come to join in harmonic union the loved-kindred words of the Poet to the strains of a celestial harmony, like an immortal youth to his heavenly bride, will the deep interior significance, ideal grace, and magic power of this inspired lyrical utterance be perceived and felt in all its rich and

abundant fullness. Nor will this method of imparting devoted and religious truths be fully appreciated till the barren logic of the school-men, with the dry, dead formulas of the past, has given place to the living, inspired, and truly regenerate literature. Most respectfully yours, S. E. BROWNELL.

TRUTH AND THE BIBLE.

Truth, with the mass of minds, is always estimated by its origin, by those who utter it, and the place where it is found. It is a well-known fact, that while what is taught for truth by one man is readily received as such by a certain class of men, it would be deemed damnable heresy by the same men if promulgated by another. Hence, when any thing new comes up in philosophy or religion, the first question in regard to it is, "Who says so?" The answer to which decides, with them, its truth or falsity. To illustrate, What gives force and weight to the doctrines of the different religious sects of the day? Is it not that they are peculiar to our church, or were preached by our ministers? Let the same sentiments be heard in another church, and uttered by another man, and they would be rejected as the most fatal errors. Or, some would say of it as did a Baptist of Boston when he heard John Murray preach. On leaving the church he was asked how he liked him? to which he replied, that "He preached a good many things, but he did not believe one of them."

By the Christian world the Bible is considered not only the fountain of all truth, but an infallible guide to it; hence any thing that they fail to discover in it must be false; while they find no difficulty in swallowing any religious monstrosities, hoofs, horns, and all, provided they think they can find it recorded in the Bible.

A late editor of a religious paper in New England advocates the above doctrines in the following graph:

"Now we were born a Protestant, and have to go by the Bible; and whatever God has taught us in his Word we feel bound to receive as true, even though we might feel ourselves competent to reason out a better system of truth than he has revealed."

What is this but saying, that the truths of the Bible may be unreasonable, and inconsistent with the truths recorded in the great Book of Nature, written by the finger of God, not man. Just as though God is so inconsistent with himself, and divided in his nature, as to make one truth conflict with another, which would be an impossibility; since two things can not be true which are opposite in nature. One must necessarily be true and the other false. All truth, whenever and wherever found, must and will be reasonable. Hence, if the Bible is a revelation from God to rational beings, must not its doctrines and truths be reasonable? If not, would not that prove him an unreasonable God? The fact that a doctrine is unreasonable is clear evidence that it is untrue. Because truth, wherever found, whether on *Heaven* or on Christian ground—whether in the Bible or in nature—is consistent with reason. And it is none the more true because found in the Bible; neither is it false because not recorded there. The fact is, truth requires no vouchers to make it true, and a world of unbelief can not make it false. It is as old as eternity, and exists everywhere and in every thing. It is written upon the tablets of every heart, inscribed upon all organized and unorganized matter in the universe. It glows in the stars and blossoms in the trees.

The Christian idea that the Bible is not only the fountain and infallible guide to all truth, but that the truths therein found clash with reason, experience, and known facts, has been the cause of more skepticism and infidelity than all things else put together. Are the new truths in the arts and sciences, and in philosophy, false because not recorded in the Bible? Are steam and electricity the mere phantoms of some hare-brained fanatic? Have they in fact no existence? It was once deemed heresy to inculcate any philosophic doctrine not taught in the Bible; and, judging from this test, we are not far removed from the dark ages.

If the truth is as old as eternity, it can not be dependent on the Bible for its validity. Must we use the Bible for a telescope or microscope for the discovery of truth? May it not be discovered through some other medium? If not, I suppose no truth was known before the compilation of the Bible. Indeed, it seems very questionable in the minds of many whether there is any truth outside of the Bible and church.

If the Bible is a record of truths, as is contended, must they not have existed before recorded in it? and were they not as much truths then as now? The Bible teaches there is a God, a Christ, and the immortality of the soul. But was there no God, no Christ, no immortality before the Bible declared them? Again, if the Bible is the only source of truth, what shall we say of the world before there was a Bible, and of the greater portion of mankind now who never heard of a Bible? Have they no truth? Is a truth in philosophy or mathematics untrue till written in a book? Again, if the Bible be an infallible guide to all truth, even in religious matters, and so plain that a wayfarer man, though a fool, may not err therein, how does it happen that there are so many religious sects, embracing doctrines entirely opposite in their nature and results, since they all take the Bible for the man of their counsel and guide?

Is not this fact clear evidence that there is as much need of the exercise of reason and common sense in understanding the truths of the Bible as any other book? "a down-east" editor to the contrary notwithstanding.

There are some very good Christians who can not see how what was deemed true by the "Fathers" can possibly be false; and hence, with them, it is sacrilegious to question any thing written by the great and good of olden times, especially if recorded in the Bible. Such credulity is the greatest stumbling-block in the way of advancing mankind in knowledge and goodness with which progressionists have to contend. It has always seemed to us, that if men would study nature more and books less, they would be much wiser and better than now; since it is more profitable to study a thing than a description of it, although beautifully written. This veneration for a thing or a doctrine merely because sanctioned by some great and good man, or because written in an old book, be it the Bible or any other book, reminds me of a boy who had a problem given him to solve. Failing to solve it, he first attributes his failure to its not being a "fair sum." But this not satisfying those who gave it to him, he soon ascertained that it was not in the Arithmetic. Thus it is with theologians. If any thing turns up that they do not understand, or that is not in accordance with their preconceived opinions or youthful education, they either call it a holy mystery, or condemn it because not found in books, or the Bible.

Such is our superstition for the past, that we seldom advance an idea without backing it up with a *thus saith* some ancient author, or receive an idea without requiring such wonders, just as though what was not conceived in some ancient noddle has no claims to truth. This state of things is mostly owing to sophisticated popes, priests, and designing men. This going back to ancient philosophers for truth instead of reaching forward, is no compliment to the present age. We must be poor scholars to start with all they knew, and surrounded with our superior advantages for knowledge, if we know no more than they did.

Or, what is equally ludicrous, is the idea that all truth was delegated to the first age of the world for safe keeping, so that all we have to do is to swallow the philosophy and doctrines of our fathers which have been mumbled for us their weak-headed children, not realizing that there are in the future new truths which each successive age of time and eternity will develop, which will be adapted to that and no other age?

The idea that what is said and written in one age is adapted to all coming time, is as consistent as the idea that what amused the child will delight the man.

In keeping with the above doctrines, is the pompous talk about the inconsistency of this or that with the laws of nature when any new thing turns up, just as though some of the would-be-wisdom understand all the laws of nature, and are capable of deciding what is and what is not in accordance with nature's laws. It is time that this superstition from the past was done away with. If we would progress in truth and knowledge we must become a thinking people, and rely more on ourselves and less on books, priests, and designing politicians.

Who are the discoverers of new truths, and most ready to receive them when brought to light? Who have filled the day with wonder and astonishment by their startling discoveries which have annihilated space and time? They are not mere book-worms, but the thinking, investigating, and inquiring minds, who, believing that there are new truths yet to break forth in regard to all matters, are ever upon the wing, to catch, like the hawk, its earliest dawn.

Yet such men are, more than any others, the subjects of ridicule and the targets for the missiles of the senseless multitude; for true worth only excites envy. Our books are, with a few honorable exceptions, little else than a stereotyped edition of the sayings and doings of the "Fathers," which are about as much adapted to this age of steam as are swaddling bands to manhood. There would be no more impropriety in our adopting the ancient systems of government, than their religious and theological views. The fact is, man is a progressive being placed in a progressive world, which must be obvious to the most casual observer of nature.

The world once was not but a chaotic mass, which change and progression have molded into its present form and beauty. Man commenced his being with the development of his lower nature, and has ever been advancing in intelligence and virtue; and hence all truths which have been given him have been of a higher order, adapted to his advanced state.

There is just as much consistency in going to the Old Testament for a true idea of God and of his character, or to prove the annihilation of the soul, as to go to ancient teachers and philosophers to prove or disprove any new truth.

Would it be wise to go back to ancient astronomy to prove the earth flat, and that the sun revolves around it? or to the Koran to prove Christianity a humbug? Then let us be consistent, and seek truth everywhere and in every thing; and study God more in his works, that we may have a better knowledge of ourselves and of Him.

H. KNAPP.

LOCKPORT, N. Y.

FACTS AND REMARKS.

HAVE ANIMALS SPIRITS?—It is not my purpose to offer a decided opinion on this question at present, but to state a fact which came to my personal knowledge, and which exhibits an astonishing endowment of spiritual perception, to say the least, on the part of so stupid an animal as a common land turtle. The creature had found its way to my mother's garden, and was feasting itself upon the cucumbers. Being caught in the thirteenth act, he was unceremoniously thrown over the fence to some distance. In a few hours, however, that same turtle (known by peculiar marks) was found again in the cucumber bed, pursuing his gustatory delights as if nothing had happened. He was expelled again, and this time was carried to some distance, across a brook, and left among the rocks and bushes; but the next day he was again found in the garden, chewing up the cucumbers with all the nonchalance of a turtle who had planted them, and hoed them, and now felt that he had a right to them. As his pretensions were still disputed, he was then carried over a hill, across two fences closely underpinned with stones, across a wagon road, and thrown over another fence into a meadow among the high grass, and told to never show his face in those "diggings" again; but the next day his identical turtleship was found again among the cucumber vines breaking his long fast with greedy voracity! How can we account for the apparent intelligence of the ugly little "harmin'" but by supposing that there is a magnetic and quasi-spiritual rapport between him and the locality so perfectly furnishing the requisites of his nutrition, and that he was thus drawn back to the garden by an instinctive perception of its diwion and position!

DOUBLE PERSONAL APPEARANCES.—We have recently heard, from unquestionable sources, the most marvelous stories of the personal appearances of individuals in this city, in places distant from where their bodies were afterward ascertained to be. For instance, a friend has just informed us that he saw the apparition of a man of his acquaintance in Broadway, and spoke to him, and touched him, and that the latter responded to him, and otherwise appeared as he always had done, with the exception of a certain unhealthiness in his expression. It was afterward ascertained that that man was in a distant city at that very moment. In another instance a couple of young men appeared, on one Sunday evening, at the house of one of their friends, and even ate and drank while there, and then suddenly and mysteriously disappeared. It was afterward ascertained beyond all doubt, that those young men were at home in their rooms at the very moment of their apparition at the other place. We are perfectly aware that these are tough stories, and not to be believed on slight evidence. Facts, however, are not to be rejected even in this department of mystery, and for such alleged occurrences as the above we think it is not impossible to conceive an adequate philosophy. The writer of this is prepared to prove from authentic history that such apparitions as are mentioned above were not unfrequently some two centuries ago, and that some of the old pneumatologists had a philosophy for them which at least seemed very plausible.

A WONDERFUL SPIRIT-PICTURE.—Some months ago we published the singular fact that the likeness of a certain well-known, though not very publicly known Spiritualist, a clergyman of this city, was suddenly found impressed on a piece of painted floor-cloth under a stove, at Mr. Snyder's, at Green Point, where the gentleman was in the habit of attending spiritual circles. As we then stated, the likeness of a negro was also impressed in a kneeling posture by the side of the clergyman, and that the latter was knowingly pointing him up to heaven. The gentleman exhibited this picture at the TELEGRAPH-Office Conference on Tuesday evening of last week, and stated a fact concerning it which we deem so wonderful as to deserve special record: It is that the picture, which ordinarily is dark and somewhat indistinct in its features, will, when placed in the hands of certain mediums, become distinctly illuminated, and sometimes so remarkably as to exhibit even the color of the eyes! This phenomenon has been witnessed by numerous persons, as well those who had not as to those who had been previously told of its occurrence, and there seems to be no room for possible mistake concerning it.

A CLERGYMAN CONVINCED.—Dr. Wellington, at a recent Doolworth's Hall Conference, related the case of an Episcopal clergyman in his family (no name), while undergoing medical treatment in his mansion, heard Spiritualism freely talked about, and was induced to test its facts by calling upon a medium. In the course of his interview he received a communication to which the name of his first wife was appended, who had died before he had migrated to this country from England, and whose name had probably never been mentioned this side of the Atlantic. The gentleman made a second call upon the medium, prepared with twenty written questions. To these he successively pointed, holding the paper so that no one could see it but himself. Some of the questions required to be answered simply "Yes," or "No," and others required an explanatory sentence; but all were answered promptly, correctly, and appropriately. The gentleman's skepticism was entirely removed, and he afterward acknowledged that all the wealth of New York would not purchase of him the knowledge and conviction he had thus obtained.

PSYCHOLOGIZED BY A WATCH SPRING.—At a recent Conference at 553 Broadway, Mr. I. C. Pray related a singular case showing the power of a mental impression over the physical system. A man, while lifting one day, heard a singular sound apparently proceeding from his chest. He thought there must be a rupture of some of the thoracic viscera, and immediately became powerless. He was carried home, and for three months was under the hands of a physician, after which he felt able to move about a little. On getting up he got his watch, which he had laid aside when he had "hurt" himself, and did not wound since. He attempted to wind it up, but it gave forth the identical sound he had heard proceeding from his chest at the time he experienced his supposed injury. The man immediately saw that he had been the victim of his own imagination, and that he had experienced no real injury at all.

A SPIRIT PREDICTION FULFILLED.—Mr. H. H. Taylor, of East Roadman, Jefferson Co., N. Y., in writing us on business, incidentally mentions the following fact: He says that having paid a visit to Mr. D., a sick neighbor, he felt, on returning home, a strong impulse to form a circle. He obeyed the impression, when, through his wife, who is a good tipping medium, it was spelled out by a Spirit who purported to be the father of Mr. D., that the latter would die within four days. The next day the two physicians who were in attendance upon Mr. D. declared that he was better, and would not doubt get well; but the disease subsequently took another turn, and at the close of the fourth day, sure enough, he quietly passed into the Spirit-world, to the astonishment of his physicians and all his friends!

THE SPIRITS IN A SABBATH SCHOOL.—C. A. Bisbee, writing to the *Spiritualist* under the name of Chardon, Genoa Co., Ohio, tells of a young lady who was in that place last winter, and while there was developed as a speaking medium. She afterward returned to her home in Pittsfield, Loraine Co., where she was a member of a church and teacher in a Sabbath school. The other church members mourned over her exceedingly, but nevertheless besought her to resume her place in the Sabbath school, which she at first refused to do, fearing that she would be controlled by the Spirits, to speak. She however finally consented to resume the management of her class, but before the session was over she was controlled to speak, and poured forth a torrent of pathetic eloquence which drew tears from some of those present. The school, however, broke up in consternation, and did not resume its sessions for fear that the "devil" would appear among them again. We cast out that unmistakable sign of true faith, consisting in the power to "cast out devils," which the church originally possessed!

A BODY RESISTED TO ANOTHER SPIRIT.—At an assemblage of Spiritualists a few evenings since, we saw a gentleman acted upon by spiritual influence in a singular manner. He immediately became powerless, sank down across two chairs, became muscularly rigid from head to foot, gasped as if dying, and almost ceased to breathe. His body was evidently dead to his own spirit; but while in this state his lungs and organs of speech were apparently put in action by a volition independent of his own, and a somewhat lengthy speech was uttered which evidently had no more connection with his mind than a piece of music has with the instrument on which it is played.

NEW YORK CONFERENCE.

NOVEMBER 28, 1854.

Dr. Partridge objected to the creation of temporary forms by Spirits, as contended for by Mr. Partridge, that if it could be done by Spirits out of the body it could be done by those in the body as well. He thinks psychology must account for the manifestations of Spirit-hands, etc. Mr. Fishbough thinks the subject under consideration of vast importance, involving the very depths of spiritual philosophy. In his opinion the modern phenomena do not furnish facts enough, or at least they have not been observed with sufficient care to establish the absolute truth of the matter. Happily, in this dilemma, the pneumatologists of the middle ages, who understood this matter far better than we do, come to our aid. They had their "astral-spirit," and on consulting an old book he had fallen in his way, he found that he had a chemical process, now unhappily lost, by which a palingsencia, i. e., regeneration or new birth of a plant was made to appear from the ashes of the old one thus chemically decomposed. He hoped the art would be discovered yet, whereby he should be able not only to reproduce the forms of plants as they did, but at the same time reproduce a little more veneration and respect for the wisdom of those who have devoted more profound study to such mysteries than we have ourselves. Mr. F. went on to state the philosophy of this regeneration. The particles of the plant reduced to ashes in the retort were of necessity very pure of all it. Thus, the stalk, leaves, and flowers were all in their ultimate particles present. But the process which reduced them to ashes did not destroy the affinity existing among them, and, hence, when caused to ascend by heat, these particles must inevitably assume the original form of the plant. Now, the same law exists among human particles—decomposition simply performs the work of disintegration of particles, and when they reassemble by virtue of affinity, they must take on the form of the body that gave them off. In this way we are able to explain the apparitions seen occasionally in old graveyards. Baron Reichenbach alludes to this fact, and ascribes it to a natural cause. Mr. Fishbough thinks the same may be true of the living body. A emanation of its particles is constantly going on, and he thinks Spirits must clothe themselves, either partially or wholly, with these emanations, in order to make any other and physical manifestation to us whatever! In this way he explained many recorded facts of ancient date, and also the production of a letter, a report of which will be found among other interesting facts in the TELEGRAPH of December 21. He thinks a Spirit, by entering itself with the organic emanations of Mr. Partridge (called his "nerve-spirit," or "star-spirit") became, for the time, a quasi being of the outer world, and attained the organic instrumentality and power of writing that letter. Spirit-hands, etc., are made under tables in the same way.

Dr. Gray did not think it necessary to go back to the middle ages to explain the facts of to-day. He thought both their facts and their philosophy in some cases alike doubtful. He thought it best to keep at least one foot on the earth while we reach up into heaven, or, in other words, to ascertain whether modern science does not offer a satisfactory solution of the physical manifestations of our own times. He contended that the "Nerve spirit" of the Seeress of Provoost, or the "Astral spirit" of the necromantic times of astrology and alchemy. The facts of to-day are, that Spirits manifest themselves to us tangibly—not as feet, but with solid forms. He would take his friend Partridge's testimony on that point in preference to the combined speculations of the middle ages. These chemical organizations belong to the domain of modern science; they conform to its known laws, and it is not necessary to apply the hypotheses of the past to them. Dr. Gray cited several facts (already reported) in proof of his opinion.

The subject was discussed at some length by several gentlemen whose names do not appear. One gentleman proffered a theory out of some of the facts of modern philosophy. He constructed a sort of house of cards, before he spent much time in looking for the lost chemical of Mr. Fishbough's palingsencia. He alluded to that class of facts in which intensity is a substitute for quantity. As, for instance, a live coal held in a pair of tongs and made to revolve rapidly within a given circle, will present to the eye a continuous ring of light. By the same law, soft substances are made to operate upon those that are more solid: give to paper the requisite intensity of motion, and it will divide a bar of steel, etc., etc. From these, and other analogous facts, may it not be inferred, since it is conceded by many, that time and space, as such, are unknown to a Spirit, that a single atom may be able to present to the senses the idea of a perfect hand, or any other portion of the physical organization that a spirit may choose to represent! The ingenious speaker did not attach great weight to this hypothesis, but thought it quite as good as some other explanations which had been given.

An extract from a letter of Mr. Conklin, a medium well known in this city, embraced the following facts: A gentleman, a skeptic, was in communication with his father, and after receiving a short sentence he asked: "Father, how old were you when you died?" Here the Spirit rapped forty-eight times. "That is not right," he replied. The Spirit insisted that he was right, and told him to go home and ask his mother. The gentleman would not believe the Spirit, and apparition dissatisfied that his father should insist. He, however, left, confident that he was right, and the Spirit wrong. I thought nothing more about it until the next day, when the same gentleman called again, and stated to all present, that on going home he asked his mother how old his father was when he died. "Why, forty-nine, my son." "So I thought," he replied, "but I have just come from the Spirit Medium, and his spirit says that he was but forty-eight years old." "Then his spirit is mistaken," replied his mother: "for do you not know that his age was published as forty-nine years, and does not the tombstone bear the same evidence?" Here the matter ended until evening, when the subject was again brought up by the gentleman and his mother, and the old family Bible referred to as proof, when behold, to the surprise of all, that *Book* (for it contains much truth) told them in writing that they were all wrong, and that the spirit was right. He was but forty-eight years old to a day. Another: A lady called, and received a communication to this effect:

DEAR MOTHER—Grandmother is coming to see you. She will be here on Monday next (four days). Thine, JOSHUA.

The lady stated that the Spirit must be mistaken, for her mother, who was living with her sister in Mass., had not the slightest idea of coming to Buffalo. But it was no use; the Spirit told her that she was. I heard nothing more until the Monday following, when the lady called again at my room, bringing with her an elderly lady, whom she introduced to me as her mother. Her mother had declared to come and spend the winter with her daughter in Buffalo, and had written a letter to that effect on the very day the Spirit of her grandson communicated to his mother in Buffalo, that she intended to come. The lady told me that she was conversing as to the time she should get to Buffalo, providing she left on a certain day, and had concluded that she would arrive here on Monday. This conversation took place at about the same hour the Spirit was conversing through me in Buffalo. I never saw either of the ladies previous.

Adjoined.

BLOWING HOT AND COLD.—Last Sunday, as there was no gathering of Spiritualists in this city (Brooklyn), I attended Rev. Mr. Inskip's church, thinking I might glean something by the wayside, and feeling that there is some truth in every assemblage of mortals, no matter what the sect. Our text was one well known among Spiritualists: "And when the day of Pentecost was fully come," etc.—your readers are probably all familiar with it. The disciples then met in a circle of harmony, being of one mind, and waiting for the manifestations. I was much pleased when I heard the text read, and curious to hear what change would be rung this time, as I had heard the same chapter referred to on two different occasions within one week; previous, once by a Spiritualist, and afterward by a Rev. Secularian. On this occasion, Bro. Inskip exhorted his hearers to come together on one accord and for one purpose (the conversion of souls, for one soul was worth more than countless worlds, etc.), as the disciples of old, and God would make as signal a display as then. Bro. Inskip said, We have no sympathy with a certain notorious sect that believe in these things now—apathy, the speaking in tongues, etc., and wound up his discourse by saying, that if those things occurred in those days, how much more need of them now! He would dispense with the prayer-meeting after preaching on account of the storm, and there being so few present (perhaps between one and two hundred). I thought there was time and opportunity enough to save one soul out of that number. This is what I call blowing Hot and Cold.

A SCAMP AT A HOTEL, said the New York Independent, the other night stole a clergyman's bag, well filled with sermons. Hope he may find them full of the hottest orthodoxy, for a regular universal salvation manuscript would hardly bring such a fellow to repentance.

Original Communications.

A POEM.

BY THE SPIRIT OF EDGAR A. POE.

On Thursday, the 30th ult., while seated in our office at 300 Broadway, in company with Rev. THOMAS L. HARRIS and Mr. Lewis L. Peet, we observed that the physical and mental conditions of Bro. H. were strongly influenced by some foreign agency, which seemed to abstract his mind from the sphere of his outward relations. At length he was profoundly entranced, and, while under the influence of an invisible intelligence, improvised two Poems, making in all about one hundred and fifty lines. The second poem, purporting to be from the immortal EDGAR A. POE, was spoken in some fifteen minutes, and is here published as originally dictated. It is a bold and graceful utterance, and the internal evidence in support of its peculiar claims is strong and convincing.—Ed.

A lurid mantle wrapped my Spirit-form,
Cradled in lightnings and in whirlwinds born,
Torn from the body, terribly downcast,
Plunged headlong through red furnaces in blast;
Those seething torments maddened me; I fell,
But woke in Eirene instead of Hell;
Like song-waves circling in a golden bell,
Like fragrant odors in a woodbine dell,
Like glowing pistils in a rose unblown,
Like all sweet dreams like Joine in slumber shown,
Like Heaven itself, like joy incarnate glen;
And as a ship through wintry whirlwinds driven
Finds land-locked port in Araby the blest,
So I, through terror, entered into rest.

Then there came my Fanny's Maiden
From her dim and mystic Aiden,
And a light from her full bosom shone her Angel-form before,
And she whispered as the roses
When the blushing bud unloses,
And like dew from off a blossom fell her speech forevermore.

"I have waited, I have waited,
As the Evening Star belated,
When it lingers pale and lonely by the purple sunset door.
I have found thee, I have found thee,
And with heart-spells fast have bound thee."
So from out her halo sang the Angel Maid Lenore.

To my rapt, enamored seeming,
Framed amid the golden gleaming,
Like a star in its own brightness high above the ocean's floor,
Shone the lovely apparition,
And from Earth's accursed perdition
I was lifted by the Angel, and my death-in-life was o'er.

O the sorrow, the despairing,
The wild terror phrased with daring,
The wild wind-tempest of remorse that my earth-bound Spirit bore!
Like the tempest-lashed Atlantic
With my anguish I was frantic,
And the serpent men name Hunger gnawed into my bosom's core.

While on Earth the Poet hungered
For heart-blood, the gay would wonder,
And poor beggars spurned the rich man, heaping curses evermore,
Till I prostrate fell despairing,
In my anguished breast unsharing
All Earth's unshared sorrows, crushed as never man before.

I was mad with desolation,
Like a sun from out creation
Stricken rudely and its brightness turned to blood upon its shore.
For years was broken-hearted:
Long before my youth departed
Heart by Fate down-trodden into palpitating gore.

And I fled Life's outer portal,
Deeming anguish was immortal,
Crying, "Launch thy heavy thunders, tell me never to adore.
Hate for hate and curse for curses,
Through abyssal universes,
Plunge me down as lost Archangels fell despairingly of yore."

So the whirlwind bore my Spirit,
But to lands that Saints inherit,
And it seems my heart forever like a ruby cup runs o'er.
I am blest beyond all blessing,
And an Angel's pure encircling,
Flows around my soul forever like a stream around its shore.

"THE QUESTION OF A FIRST CAUSE."

KINDLY ADDRESSED TO BRO. E. E. GIBSON.

My Friend—I have read your remarks upon the article of Dr. Cragin with pleasure, for they are both philosophical and logical. If I understand you, you claim that it is a flat contradiction to attempt to prove an "uncaused cause" from the axiom, "That nothing can exist without an adequate cause." My friend, let us see if we can not get over this difficulty by adopting another method of argument.

Is it not absurd to say, that before any thing *was*, something came into existence? If so, it follows, since things do exist, that something must have always been in existence. What is "that something" which has always been in being? A very brief analysis of the nature of those things which exist, will show that "that something" is a Unity, an Infinity, an intelligent creative force. This method is claimed to be the only truly logical and correct mode of demonstrating by argumentation the being of a God. Intuition affirms, Reason demonstrates.

It is evident that the axiom, Nothing can exist without an adequate cause, can only apply to such things as have had a beginning. Those things which are uncreated and self-existent, need no cause to produce them, for there never was a time when they were not. Hence, before we can apply the axiom, "That nothing can exist without a cause to produce it," we must first show that those things to which we seek to apply this axiom have not always existed.

Let us, then, in our inquiry begin thus: It is absurd to say that before any thing was, something came into existence. For nothing out of nothing, can not make something. "Things exist." Therefore something must have always been in existence.

What is that something?
That which has always existed must be self-existent and eternal. It must also be absolutely independent of all other things. But if it is self-existent, eternal, and absolutely independent, it must also be one. Two things can not both be absolutely independent. For the independence of the one is carved out of the independence of the other. The independence of the one limits the independence of the other. They must act and react upon each other. That which is self-existent, eternal, and absolutely independent is also infinite. That which is infinite is one. Let us advance still further.

Since there is but one thing which has always been in existence, it follows that all other things must have had a beginning. But all things which are not uncreated, which have had a beginning, require an adequate cause to produce them. All things but one have had a beginning. Hence that one

thing was the only thing which existed anterior to all others; therefore, it alone could have been the cause which produced all other things, for there was no other cause in existence to produce them. Out of what, and in what manner, the Great First Cause created the universe, are mysteries too profound for us to penetrate.

We have now advanced thus far. We have shown (at least so we think) the existence of an uncreated, self-existent, eternal, and infinite First Cause. Also, that there was a period when all other things did not exist, and that they were all created by the infinite, self-existent Unity.

We will not at present pursue the subject further, but at some future time may more particularly inquire into the nature and attributes of this Great First Cause. Trusting that what has been advanced may be of service to Bro. Gibson, and all others in a like frame of mind, we will bring this article to a close by a few remarks upon the true foundation upon which to repose our faith in an Eternal Father is *Intuition*. Let us examine: Suppose we prove by a logical demonstration the being of a God, how do we begin? Why, by laying down certain axioms, or self-evident propositions, and upon these Reason rears her demonstration. But what is a self-evident proposition? Clearly it is one so plainly true, that no amount of argument can make it appear more true. Such propositions are said to prove themselves. But what makes a proposition appear thus self-evident? How do we know that it is true—so true that no argument is needed to prove it? It is the still, small voice of *Intuition* which speaks to us, and Reason adjoins, without *hesitation*, the unproved premises which *Intuition* offers, proceeds at once to draw its unerring deductions.

Does it not then clearly appear that the most logical and perfect argument that can be made to prove the being of a God, must after all rest entirely upon the teachings of *Intuition*? Why, then, argue upon this point? Why seek out such roundabout ways? Why not at once adopt the teachings of *Intuition*, and repose with confidence upon her voice alone. For deep within the soul of every man her divine voice proclaims an eternal God. As for the writer, he needs no better, or higher evidence of the existence of "Our Father in Heaven."

DETROIT, Nov. 18, 1854.

R. H. BROWN.

REPLY TO E. E. GIBSON.

GEORGETOWN, D. C., Nov. 10, 1854.

FRIEND BRITTAN:

I notice in your last number of the TELEGRAPH a criticism of a sentence in an article of mine by E. E. Gibson. I object with that brother, that that sentence is fully open to the objection he urges against it. Really, the *Intellect* can no more conceive logically of an uncaused God, than of ought else uncaused. Scientifically, it is no satisfactory proof of a Great First Cause, which the Intellect demands. The more truthful expression would have been, "God is the perpetual, ever-acting Cause, from Eternity to Eternity." He is the *TRIE* that binds every Effect to its preceding Cause. This idea of the necessity of a Cause preceding and producing each and every Effect is intuitive in the mind, and hence the mere Intellect rests satisfied with the idea of God as the Cause of all Causes, and hence the First but also the Last Cause. Yet the real sentiment of God comes not by sensation through the Intellect, but from within through the Soul or inmost of man, and is a Perception of *Pure Reason*, or *Intuition*; not a result of Reasoning, but a perception of *Pure Reasons*, which perceive Principles just as the eye perceives external objects. We intuitively know that we did not create, are not the Cause of ourselves. No man, not even Brother Gibson, I think, really thinks, when he opens his eyes to the midnight winter sky, that his mind creates this wonderful universe, or that it designed and created his own Being; I really can't imagine Brother Gibson means that. I behold design which I know very well my own mind did not contrive. I behold a Power which I know is not mine, but far, infinitely above my puny capacities. I perceive a purpose of Love, yea, of Infinite Love; a wisdom in adapting means to effect this Purpose, and a Power actively at work accomplishing this Purpose by these means. This Purpose, this Wisdom, this Power is not mine; was before I was, and I myself am a result of it; I have formed my Idea, my conception of this Person or Being, for Purpose or Love with Wisdom and Power makes Personality or Man. Thus I conceive of a Person or Being or Man, but I do not by that conception create Him; create what did not otherwise exist; I conceive of Him *Intuitively* as a Person or Man of Infinite Perfection, of Love, of Wisdom, and of Power. This is the first of all Principles which underlies all Truth, and is a Dogma to which I bring for measurement all *Revelations*, and all Standards, all minor principles, by which to decide their Truth or Falsity. I state this Principle thus: "God is a Person of Infinite Perfection, of Love, of Wisdom, and of Power." Reason, Intuition, sees at once its Truth. It is no more susceptible of proof, of demonstration, than the axioms of Geometry. It is itself the starting-point and fundamental axiom of all Religion, of all morality. To this Principle I bring, for testing, all Bibles, all Creeds, all moral Propositions whatever. Whatsoever Book, quasi-truth, or Doctrine contradicts this First of all Principles, I know is so far false. Let me repeat. "The Sentiment of God is the deepest of all Sentiments or Feelings, at the very bottom of Human Nature. It is a *Feeling of Dependence*, that we did not CAUSE OURSELVES. The Idea of God is, of an Infinite Perfect man; as Love, Wisdom, and Power is a Trinity of Elements, that makes up our Idea of Man or Personality; hence Infinite Love, Infinite Wisdom, and Infinite Power, makes an Infinite Man or Person. Hence the Idea of God is, of a Person of Infinite Love, of Infinite Wisdom, and of Infinite Power; of an Infinite Perfect Man. That is the human, necessary, constitutional idea of God. The conception of God in each man will be that man's highest conception or Ideal of Perfection from the lowest savage, to the highest, most developed man, in the highest celestial Heavens. But God is not that highest human Ideal. Consciousness, Reason, or Intuition assures us of that truth. I am still infinitely above the highest finite Ideal. That I am as sure of as that I myself am. I am sure I did not cause myself, the world about me, or God; just as sure as that I am that He is. This truth is constitutional in Human Nature. Hence I know Brother Gibson does not believe he created God. He knows he did not even create himself or that article of Mind; much less that *Inconceivable Being*, of whose real nature the universes of matter and spirit are the revealing shadows.

Very truly your friend,
CHARLES H. ERAGIN.

A soft answer turneth away wrath; but grievous words stir up anger. The tongue of the wise useth knowledge aright; but the mouth of fools poureth out foolishness.—Solomon.

SPIRIT-LIGHT.

BY MRS. R. A. ATWELL.

Oh, tell me not there is no joy
Upon this changing earth,
No comfort for the weary soul
And its sick heart's death;
Oh, no! though dark may be the day,
And dismal be the night,
Behind the deep, obscuring veil
There is a shining light.
Though dim at first the light may seem,
And feeble be its ray,
Its sunny beams will stronger grow
To guide us on our way;
Expanding wide from east to west,
From sunny south to north,
Its brilliant beams are scattered wide,
Its holy light goes forth;
Like some lone star in midnight sky,
Encompassed round with gloom,
It broke upon life's dreary waste,
And pierced the silent tomb!
The clouds of darkness roll away,
And forms of beauty bright
Clap their pure angel-hands with joy,
And revel in the light;
Around each dear and loving form
They clasp their seraph wings,
And chant, in music's sweetest strains,
The glad news they bring:
They tell us of a "better land,"
A brighter world above,
Where the dear Spirit dwells
In its own ark of love;
They tell us of the promised rest,
Of joy which there awaits;
They point the path that leads thereto,
And ope the crystal gates.
Then tell me not there is no joy
Upon this changing earth,
No comfort for the weary soul
Amid its sick heart's death;
Though all the path of human life
Be full of toil and care,
One cheering beam of Spirit-light
Will shed new lustre there.

October 23, 1854.

CONTRADICTORY MANIFESTATIONS.

On or about the fifth of October, Mrs. J. H., a medium, called at my office in Warren Street, Hudson, and after some ordinary conversation I told her I had heard from my late wife (now separated from me), and that she was dead. I had first received intelligence in the ordinary way of her being ill, and Spirits had told me since that she was deceased. After some further talk I requested Mrs. H. to endeavor to get a communication at the present time, either yes or no, concerning the actual state of things in regard to my late wife. In the most obliging manner she proceeded to comply with my request. She laid down some flower seeds she had in her right hand, and shortly after the said hand commenced a great number of jerking, odd contortions, and she proceeded to tell me that Dr. W. was then, present—an old surgical physician, who had lived and died some years since here in Hudson—a man for probity and truth well known to all while here. On inquiring if it was true concerning the demise of my wife, the Spirit immediately declared it was so, by three raps with Mrs. H.'s finger; also stating in reply to the inquiry of how long since, that she had been dead nine days! Soon after this, Mrs. H. took her leave. The evening following I saw Mrs. F.—a highly accomplished, careful medium, who, on being informed in regard to the statement of Mrs. H., immediately contradicted it, telling me that my wife had been quite ill, but was now better. A few evenings after these occurrences, we all met at the house of Mrs. H., whose daughter is also a tipping medium, and held there a circle. On our first sitting down to the table, Mrs. H. being a speaking, writing, and gestulating medium, did not sit down with us, but stood by the table, and was not at that time in the room. Mrs. F., the lady addressed, was the chief medium at this first sitting. After a short time the table commenced tipping and rapping, in answer to our questions. On my asking if my wife was in the land of Spirits, I received a direct negative.

Another Spirit now commenced, purporting to be that of Swedenborg, who also returned a negative to the same question; and no sooner had this last answer been given, than Mrs. H.'s daughter came into the room, and declared that the one who was now answering was not the Spirit of Swedenborg. This unexpected interruption produced some little discord, and she was asked how she knew? To which no answer was given. Mrs. F. now withdrew from the table, stating that she would not hinder Mrs. H.'s daughter from taking a seat at the table because she was there. The girl would not accept the place, however, but retired to one corner, and seemed to busy herself with sketching something. After much argument, *pro and con*, all parties finally arranged themselves around the table the second time, Mrs. H.'s daughter included. In a very little while the table began to thump most violently, and to my inquiry concerning my wife, answered in the affirmative, declaring her to be in the Spirit-land, the Spirit purporting to be that of Dr. W! I next asked the Spirit of Dr. W. if he would write his name? when he declared by raps he would not. I then stated I would not believe it was Dr. W.'s Spirit unless I could see his handwriting, the chirography of which I well knew.

On my saying this, Mrs. H. declared I was too particular—I ought to be satisfied as it was, and not ask any more proof, etc. It was declared, in fact, that I was too eager to find out if I could, and the daughter, rising from the table, repeated the words of her mother, saying loudly, "I was too eager;" and said, "You are, if I may say so, too d-d eager, and should not get the writing on any account at all!" The discord now became so great that the circle broke up in confusion, and we shortly took our leave, most of us with a firm resolution not to go there again.

Just as we were about leaving, the young lady medium who had involuntarily thus used such very strong language, altered her mind, and went on to show me a specimen of Dr. W.'s handwriting! I looked at the specimen, written as it was with a pencil, and but just discernible, and found a slight resemblance, enough, probably, to identify it as the same. We then left for home. The sequel remains to be told. That very same night Mrs. F. received a spiritual communication at home in her own house, stating that a few days was not only alive, but much better than she had been! In a few days from this time I received a letter from my wife, proving the truthfulness of Mrs. F. as a medium in every particular.

I will now state my impressions concerning the use of these false communications. There is not any thing, in my opinion, permitted by the Father without a corresponding utility. It is evident to any reflecting person that were every communication true, mankind would soon put their whole confidence in Spirits, and scarcely ever think of the Father of all Spirits, the Great Origin of all truth—God! Therefore Spirits are allowed occasionally to give us reversed, or what we term false, intelligence. It may be in strict accordance with our own condition of mind at the time they are given that these communications come to us reversed or false—when in fact they may be truly given from the Spirit-land, for truth and reality I think alone reign there.

Some days after the above transactions, I chanced one evening to call for the Spirit of Dr. W., and was informed of him, in the name of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. "If it were true that my wife was in the land of Spirits!" I immediately received a negative in reply!

Yours truly,
R. B. D.

MEDICAL ANECDOTE.—Kien Long, Emperor of China, inquired of Sir G. Staunton, the manner in which physicians were paid in England. When, with some difficulty, his majesty was made to comprehend the manner of paying physicians in England for the time their patients were sick, he exclaimed, "Is any man well in England who can afford to be ill! Now I will inform you how my illness is managed: I have four, to whom the care of my health is committed; a weekly salary is allowed them, but the moment I am ill, their salary stops till I am well again. I need not inform you that my illnesses are very short."

Interesting Miscellany.

DOGMATISM AND DESPOTISM.

We extract the following from the November number of *Putnam's Magazine*. We know not the author, unless it be Parke Godwin:

If the advanced civilization of our age and country rejects the grosser applications of force by which opinion was wont to be controlled, there are others, it seems to us, which are not entirely discontinued. A less barbarous, a more refined tyranny is still compatible with the general sense of propriety and justice. There are chains which men forge for their fellows which fret and cut their souls, if they do not enchain their bodies. There are inquisitions of obliquity and hatred which succeed to the inquisitions of the flag and flame. There is a moral Coventry almost as humiliating and oppressive as the stern solitude of the dungeon. The spirit of bigotry may survive the destruction of its carnal weapons; despotism may retain its instincts, and give vigorous signs of vitality, long after the sword shall have been wrenched from its grasp; and the fires will burn in the eyes of bigotry when they have already ceased to burn upon its altars. For what is the essential and distinctive characteristic of despotism? Not its outward instruments—its bastilles, its gibbets, its bayonets, its knouts, and its thumb-screws—but its animating purpose. It is the disposition to suppress the free formation and publication of opinion by other means than those by which the mind is legally moved—by other influences than motives addressed to the understanding, the reason, and the better feelings of the heart. Wherever a man's bread is taken away because he votes with this party or that, wherever he is denounced to public odium because of the heterodoxy of his honest sentiments, wherever moral turpitude is imputed to him on account of his speculative errors, wherever he is tormented by the mob on any account—wherever the inveterate of public prejudice compels him to remain silent altogether, or to live a life of perpetual hypocrisy, wherever his sincere conviction can not be disclosed and promulgated for fear of personal discomfort and annoyance, wherever even a limit is fixed to the progress of research, there despotism flourishes, with more or less strength—and only needs the concurrence of circumstances to be nursed into muscular violence and fury.

Now, as we have said, it seems to us that, tried by this test, we have despotisms in the United States, just as they have elsewhere, and that, with all our advances in liberality of which we justly boast, we come short in practice of the brilliant ideal of our institutions. We have not attained to a genuine and universal liberty (we will not say tolerance, because that word is borrowed from an age when freedom was supposed to be a boon and not a right), and we fail not in one or two, but in many respects. In the Church, in the State, in the popular auditorium, and in the more private relations of society, we surround ourselves with needless barriers, we build walls of separation between ourselves and the great realms of intelligence yet unexplored, and we paralyze those intellectual energies which are our only instruments for exploring them, the only tools for working the golden mines of truth.

In the first place, we can not but consider a large number of our ecclesiastical organizations as so many restraints upon the freedom of the mind. Founded upon creeds which admit of no possibility of truth beyond their own formulas, they discourage inquiry in the largest and most important domains of thought. We agree with Kant, the great German philosopher, who, in one of his valuable minor writings, discussing the question whether any association is justified in binding itself to certain immutable articles of faith, in order to exercise a perpetual and supreme guardianship over its members, and directly through them over the people, contends that a compact of this kind entered into, not as a simple bond of union for the interchange of common sentiments, but with a view to preclude the human race from further enlightenment, is a crime against humanity, whose highest destination consists emphatically in intellectual progress. "A combination," says he, "to obtain an unalterable religious system, which no man is permitted to call in doubt, would, even for the term of one man's life, be wholly intolerable. It would be, as it were, to blot out one generation in the progress of the human species toward a better condition; to render it barren, and hence noxious to posterity." This conduct, in the religious world, proceeds upon the assumption that our knowledge of divine things can not advance like our knowledge of natural things; that the first investigation of the Scriptures exhausted their contents, and that nothing is left for those that come after, but, as Johnson says of the followers of Shakespeare, to name their characters and repeat their phrases. But does this view do justice to the sacred Word? Granting that its leading principles may be easily discerned—a thing difficult to grant in the face of two hundred conflicting sects, each of which finds its support and nutriment in the same pages; for, as Sir Walter Hamilton is fond of quoting,

"This is the book where each his dogma deems,
And this the book where each his dogma finds,"

we must still suppose that a revelation from the Infinite will contain infinite resources of truth. Neither its alleged origin, which is from the perfect God, nor its alleged destiny, which is the final redemption of mankind from error, will allow us for a moment to treat it as an ordinary message, soon told and as speedily comprehended. It must conceal inexhaustible riches, or not be what it purports; while to suppose it to be what it purports, and yet to attempt to imlose its treasures in the frail and rickety casket of words which men devise, is an enterprise for pouring the ocean into a quart-pot, or for bottling the air of the whole heavens in one private cellar. Now is the attempt less pernicious than it is absurd; for it erects each little consistency into a separate popedom, issuing its infallible decrees and denouncing its interdicts with all the arrogance of its Roman prototype. As an inevitable consequence, two things result justly, that the supreme control of the religious sentiment of nations falls into the hands of the priesthood, who are conservative by position and training—and, secondly, that the energies of the church are absorbed in controversy or sectarian propaganda, at the expense of a free and earnest inquiry after new truth, and the culture of genial hopeful feelings. The history of our American sects, for instance, is an almost unbroken record of fierce and bigoted disputes. New England has been a kind of theological Golgotha, and the fields are covered with battered skulls. The clergy have been the ruling powers, too, not only there but everywhere; and the people have dared to laugh only with the consent of the deacons. We are aware that this aspect of things has materially changed of late years; we know, also, what inappreciable services the churches have otherwise rendered to society; but we must not forget, in the midst of our ready gratitude for these, how many of them—by means of their creeds, and the terrors of their excommunications, as well as the power of their social influences—still hang as an incubus upon the minds and consciences of their adherents. Nor upon them alone, but many others—even those who do not professively wear their colors. They too often terrify the ardent reformer, whose bright hopes they change by the magic of fear into dread specifiers; they too often arrest the uplifted arm of science when it would strike from the rock or open out from the bowels of the earth some precious fountain of use; and they too often array themselves on the side of false traditions and moldy abuses, when they should be pressing forward under the ever-giving inspirations of hope and freedom. It is said that Justinian, when he had completed the compilation of his Institutes, issued a decree that no comment should be written upon them which aimed at more than a sketch of their contents or a transcription of their titles; well, the sects are apt to copy this imperial and arbitrary example—they impose on others, as exclusively right and authoritative, their own slender selections out of the vast complexity of truths, the few pearls they have fished out of the measureless sea, fancying that they have banished error, when they have only extinguished the independence of thought. Indeed, it is scarcely too much to say, appropriating the figure of Mirabeau, where he compares truth to the statue of Isis covered by many veils, that they teach their followers to lift a single one, when they fling their clubs and bat-axes at the heads of all who would remove the others. "Præter, obli- prociat, est præfatus!" rings the chorus, and the poor audacious "in-fidel" who is every dissonant is sure to be called—hand over to an everlasting contempt. Now, what chance truth has in such a hubbub it is needless to say.

THE SPIRITS AMONG THE QUAKERS.—We learn from a Baltimore correspondent that the ghosts mustered their forces so strongly among the members of the Yearly Meeting of Friends (Hicksite branch), in session there last week, that it was found necessary to appoint a committee of investigation on the subject. The Center (Pa) Quarterly Meeting, which forms a part of the Baltimore Yearly Meeting, is said to have become quite "carried away" by the spiritual fever.

THE BEAUTIFUL MANIAC.

"The fire that on my bosom burns
Is lone as some volcanic lake—
No torch is kindled at its blaze—
A funeral pile!"

In the morning train from Petersburg there was a lady, closely veiled, in the same car with ourselves. She was dressed in the purest white, wore gold bracelets, and evidently belonged to the higher circles of society. Her figure was delicate, though well developed, and exquisitely symmetrical; and when she occasionally drew aside her richly-embroidered veil, the glimpse of her features which the beholder obtained satisfied him of her extreme loveliness. Beside her sat a gentleman in deep mourning, who watched over her with unusual solicitude; and several times when she attempted to rise, he excited the curiosity of the passengers by detaining her in his seat.

Outside the cars all was confusion; the passengers looking to baggage, porters running, cab-men cursing, and all the usual hurry and bustle attending the departure of a railroad train. One shrill warning whistle from the engine, and we moved slowly along.

At the first motion of the car, the lady in white started to her feet with one heart-piercing scream, and her bonnet falling off, disclosed the most lovely features that we ever contemplated. Her raven tresses fell over her shoulders in graceful disorder, and, clasping her hands in prayer, she turned her dark eyes to heaven! What agony was in that look! What beauty! what heavenly beauty, but not so much of misery as of beauty! Alas! that one glance told a melancholy tale.

"She was changed,

As by sickness of the soul; her mind
Had wandered from its dwelling, and her eyes,
They had not their own lustre, but the look
Which is not of earth; she was become
The queen of a fantastic realm; her thoughts
Were combinations of disjointed things;
And forms impalpable, and unperceived
Of other's sight, familiar were to hers."

Her brother, the gentleman in black, was unremitting in his efforts to soothe her spirit. He led her back to her seat; but her hair was still unbound and her beauty unveiled. The cars rattled on, and the passengers in groups resumed their conversation. Suddenly a wild melody arose; it was the beautiful maniac's voice, rich, full, and inimitable. Her hands were crossed on her heaving bosom, and she sang with touching pathos—

"She is far from the land where her young hero sleeps,
And loves around her are sighing;
But eddily she turns from their gaze and weeps,
For her heart in his grave is lying."

"She sings the wild songs of her dear native plains,
Every note which he loved awakening—
Ah, little they think who dwell in their strains,
How the heart of the minstrel is breaking!"

Her brother was unmoved, and he wept as only a man can weep. The air changed and she continued:

"Has sorrow thy young days shrouded,
As clouds of the morning fret?
Too fast have those young days faded,
That even in sorrow were sweet!
If that the minked world wither
Each feeling that once was dear—
Come, child of misfortune! come hither;
I'll weep with thee, tear for tear!"

She then sang a fragment of that beautiful hymn—

"Jesus, lover of my soul,
Let me to thy bosom fly."

Another attempt to rise up was prevented, and she threw herself upon her knees beside her brother, and gave him such a mournful, entreating look, with a plaintive "Save me, my brother! save your sister!" that scarcely a passenger could refrain from weeping. We say scarcely, for there was one man (he was a man!) who called upon the conductor to "put her out of the car." He received the open scorn of the company. His insensibilities to such a scene of distress almost defies belief, and yet this is, in every particular, an "over true tale." Should he ever read these lines, may his marble heart be softened by the recollection of his brutality.

Again the poor bewitched beauty raised her bewitching voice to one of the most solemn sacred airs:

"O! where shall rest be found—
Rest for the weary soul!"

And continued her melancholy chant until we reached the steamer Mount Vernon, on board of which we descended the magnificent James River, the unhappy brother and sister occupying the "ladies' cabin." It was a sorrow too profound for ordinary consolation, and no one dared to intrude so far upon his grief as to satisfy his curiosity.

We were standing upon the promenade deck admiring the beautiful scenery of the river, when, at one of the landings, the small boat pulled away for the shore, with the unhappy pair, en route for the asylum at— She was standing erect in the stern of the boat, her head uncovered, and her white dress and raven tresses fluttering in the breeze. The boat returned, and the steamer moved on for Norfolk. They were gone, that brother with his broken heart, that sister with her melancholy union of beauty and madness.—*Charleston Courier.*

AN ECCENTRIC PREACHER.—Murray's "Hand Book for the South of Italy" contains some curious stories respecting Fra Rocco, the celebrated Dominican preacher, and the spirited "Joe Miller" of Naples. On one occasion it is related, he preached on the mole a penitential sermon, and introduced so many illustrations of terror that he soon brought his hearers to their knees. While they were thus showing signs of contrition he cried out, "Now all of you who sincerely repent your sins hold up your hands. Every man in the vast multitude immediately stretched out both his hands. "Holy Archangel Michael," exclaimed Rocco, "thou who with thine adamantine sword standest at the right hand of the judgment-seat of God, how me every hand which has been raised hypocritically." In an instant every hand dropped, and Rocco, of course, poured a fresh torrent of eloquent invectives against their sins and their deceit. He had a great dislike to tobacco, and when once preaching in a crowd of Spanish sailors he astonished them by telling them there were no Spanish saints in heaven. A few, he said, had been admitted, but they made the Holy Virgin sick, and St. Peter sat his wife to work to get them out. At length he proclaimed that a bull-fight was to be held outside the gates of Paradise. Thereupon every Spanish saint, without exception, ran off to see the fight, and St. Peter immediately closed the gate and took care never to admit another Spaniard.

MESMERISM A FANCY ARTICLE.—In an article brought in Massachusetts, against the husband to recover compensation for mesmeric services and medicines furnished the wife, Mr. Justice Metcalf says: "A married woman may, in the absence of her husband, procure for herself necessities, and among other things, necessary medical aid and advice for which the husband will be liable. This is the general rule of law. * * * The law does not recognize the dreams, visions, or revelations of a woman in a mesmeric sleep as necessities for a wife for which the husband, without his consent, can be held to pay. These are fancy articles, which those who have money of their own to dispose of may purchase if they think proper; but they are not necessities, known to the law, for which the wife can pledge the credit of her absent husband."

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